

West Hill
Update



King County

5TH DISTRICT NEWS



DWIGHT PELZ

A REPORT FROM KING COUNTY COUNCILMEMBER DWIGHT PELZ

October 2002

Renton and Rainier Avenue Improvements

One of the things I am most proud of in my 6 years as a King County Councilmember is my work to preserve sensitive land threatened by development. Just last month we were able to gain funding in the King County budget for the Grandmother's Hill project in Tukwila in 2003.

The hill is a glacial remnant that contains fossils millions of years old. This land is also a sacred site to Native

Americans and is referred to in many oral traditions of the Puget Sound Salish people. The property also includes 600 feet of shoreline along the Duwamish in the critical transition zone between salt and

fresh water that is important to salmon habitat. I have visited the site and have been able to witness a wide variety of native plants, and views that spanned the Duwamish valley from Mt. Rainier to the south to down-



Many road improvement projects have been completed or are currently being planned, with a focus on improving pedestrian pathways and enclosing drainage ditches.

town Seattle to the north. Grandmother's Hill is 10.5 acres located on the bank of the Duwamish in the Allentown neighborhood.

Recently, the owners of the site have proposed removing these hills with dynamite for proposed light-industrial development. They are open to giving the community an opportunity to raise funds to acquire this land, but they have given a very limited window in which to do so. The cost to acquire this property is an estimated \$1.8 million dollars. This year we were able to secure \$500,000 in funds in the FY 2003 King County Budget. This money comes from the Conservation Futures Fund which is a dedicated fund of money set aside from property taxes to acquire open space in the county. With the recent funding from the King County budget and other sources, about \$600,000 has been raised to date.

The long term vision for Grandmother's Hill is to develop the site to include a minimum-impact trail system to the lower and upper vistas, as well as the woodland, wetland,

Renton and Rainier Avenue Improvements (Continued from front page)

and meadow areas. Outdoor interpretive displays would teach students and visitors about local and geologic history, botany and Native American traditions. The City of Tukwila is

willing to own and maintain the site, with the Cascade Land Conservancy holding a conservation easement. The Friends of the Duwamish River Bend Hills are committed to long-term advocacy and stewardship of the site.

One of the most rewarding parts of working on this project is the chance to work with the Friends of the Duwamish Riverbend Hill. This is a ~~tireless~~tireless ~~determined~~ group of volunteers that have single-handedly raised this project to the attention of conservation groups, elected officials, and neighbors throughout Tukwila. They meet regularly to plan tours of the property and

coordinate fundraising efforts. Their efforts have resulted in students at Foster High School putting on a play last year which raised over \$1,000 and introduced many Tukwila

residents to the need to save the hill.

We should be proud of the success that the community has had in raising funds to date, but there is a long way to go in a very short time. The Friends of the Duwamish Riverbend Hills are tireless in their work to preserve this unique property, but they need

your help. If you would like to help with your time, money or special talents please contact the folks in the box below. They have a wish list ready of volunteer opportunities that might suit your interests.

One of the most striking images from the top of Grandmother's Hill is just how much of the Duwamish Valley has been lost

to development. The sea of rooftops and parking lots is a vivid reminder of how important it is to save this special property. Please join me in the effort to make Grandmother's Hill a legacy for future generations.

"Improving the pedestrian and road safety and feel of Rainier and Renton Avenues is perhaps the most important step King County can take to revitalize the community and help residents and businesses flourish in the West Hill area."

Roads Department Open House

Saturday, October 12th,
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Dimmitt Middle School
12320 - 80th Avenue South

West Hill Unincorporated Area Council Quarterly Meeting

Tuesday, October 15th,
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Skyway VFW
7421 S 126th

Greater Skyway Business Association

Tuesday, November 12th,
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
Skyway Bowl and Casino (upstairs)
11819 Renton Ave S.

This link has been established by King County for citizens to check on the progress of the various projects in the West Hill area. It will be updated as news develops: www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/roads/projects/whill

Workcrews clean up in SE Seattle

One of the programs at the County that I have continually funded is for workcrews that lends their muscle to various clean-up projects throughout SE Seattle and unincorporated areas of the 5th district. These crews continue to receive accolades from the groups they help for their quick response and excellent work.

The workcrews can assist in activities ranging from park maintenance projects to picking up illegally dumped trash from the streets. If you know of a project that could benefit from the crews, please give my office a call at 206-296-1005.

“Mt. Anderson” Update

(continued from front page)

Since we pushed the owner to comply, we have seen many improvements to drainage on the hill, removal of underground fuel tanks, cleanup of the abandoned vehicles in the area, and compliance with the violations at the wrecking yard. But the most visible violation, the mountain itself, has changed little.

Under the court order he will be required to move the hill back from the edge of the hill to stabilize it within six months. Within 18 months Mount Anderson as we know it must be gone. By the end of 30 months he will be required to have terraced the hillside below and reduce the steepness of the slope. After 36 months the court plan worked out by all parties will be complete.

The owner is still allowed under current zoning to recycle concrete at the site. However, he is not allowed to bring in more than 50% of what he has removed in that month. He will be required to file monthly reports by the 15th of the next month demonstrating that he is still in compliance.

The clean up of these areas has been a long

process, but I am pleased that King County has entered into an agreement that sets out a timetable and clear expectations for compliance. I promise to continue to actively monitor the progress that the departments are making to enforce the law and cleanup Mount Anderson.



A timetable for the removal of the large pile of recycled materials known as Mount Anderson has been agreed upon and clean-up of the site has already begun.

5TH DISTRICT
NEWS

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Nominate this year's *Dirty dozen*

A successful community program we have sponsored in the West Hill area is the “Dirty Dozen”. This is our effort to involve the community in identifying the twelve worst sites for violations of King County codes regulating litter, junk cars and unsafe buildings.

Code enforcement officers in the county already have overwhelming caseloads. There is a great chance that the code

enforcement staff may be reduced even further in the upcoming King County budget.

With that in mind, I can’t stress how important it is that the West Hill community assist the County in identifying those offenders that are the greatest violators. We are asking you to select this year’s “Dirty Dozen”. Please contact my office at 206-296-1005 and give us your nominees for action.

How to reach District Five

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